

I'm a registered republican and I'm becoming almost ashamed to admit it. I'm increasingly concerned about what seems to be narrow minded, unethical, self-serving coordinated efforts to manipulate public opinion, particularly through the use of media blocs. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

You can bet your bottom dollar that if Sinclair does this, I will be actively watching for the renewal process for our local Sinclair stations and I will be objecting. Maybe increased grass roots participation will be a terrific boon, but I would hope that those whom we pay to manage our freedoms ethically will do their job well.

Thank you.